



CITY OF SAINT PAUL

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Council President Bostrom and
Members of the City Council
310 City Hall
Saint Paul, MN 55102

RE: Traditional Neighborhood Zoning Districts and Code Reformatting Zoning Study
Transmittal of Planning Commission Recommendation

Dear President Bostrom and Members of the City Council:

In 2000 the City received a Livable Communities grant from the Metropolitan Council to develop new zoning districts to facilitate the kind of mixed-use urban village-style redevelopment called for in the new Land Use Plan and Housing Plan chapters of the Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan adopted by the City Council in 1999. The City Council authorized the grant application to implement recommendations in the new Comprehensive Plan chapters.

The \$50,000 grant from the Metropolitan Council has been used to develop three new Traditional Neighborhood (TN) zoning districts. The new zoning districts were written with the goal that they should function simply and clearly, be easy to use and understand, and fit seamlessly into the Zoning Code. This goal led to proposed Zoning Code text amendments to create a more streamlined format for the Zoning Code as a whole.

On July 26, 2002, the Planning Commission held a public hearing on the *Traditional Neighborhood Zoning Districts and Zoning Code Reformatting Study*. The Planning Commission considered the testimony at the public hearing and the recommendations of planning staff, and had a number of subsequent committee meetings to discuss the details of this major study. On April 25, 2003, the Planning Commission unanimously recommended the attached Zoning Code text amendments. They also recommended that the existing OS-2 General Office-Service zoning

district be replaced with the new TN3 Traditional Neighborhood District, and that all property on the West Side Flats and Upper Landing currently zoned OS-2 General Office-Service be rezoned to TN3 Traditional Neighborhood.

By itself, the reformatting of the Zoning Code supports the City's development objectives. It puts the definition of each land use (i.e., transitional housing, auto repair, recycling collection center) together with all use-specific development standards that apply to the use in various zoning districts, and puts all use-specific standards and conditions for each use in one place. The zoning districts and the land uses permitted in each one are reorganized into simple tables. These changes make the Zoning Code much easier to use and understand, especially when accessed on the City web site.

The package of zoning amendments contains a number of key zoning tools to support our housing and development objectives. The new TN Traditional Neighborhood zoning districts protect the character of the commercial districts built during the streetcar era and facilitate new mixed-use urban village development. The package also contains a few citywide changes that provide some basic design standards and broaden the range of housing options by permitting live-work units and, under certain circumstances, new carriage houses.

I have reviewed the Planning Commission's work and I support it. There are three changes I would recommend as refinements. They are attached to this letter and relate to the definition of transit street, the density bonus for structured parking, and to the maximum height that may be permitted with a conditional use permit in the TN2 Traditional Neighborhood District near transit stops along University Avenue.

The Zoning Code reformatting and the Traditional Neighborhood District recommendations represent a great deal of work by the Planning Commission and PED staff. I am pleased to forward this package of zoning amendments to you for your review and adoption.

Sincerely,

Randy Kelly
Mayor

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Attachments